Learn About

WILDFIRE SMOKE EXPOSURE
Wildfire smoke is composed of fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) and harmful gases such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides. It creates poor air quality and results in negative health outcomes.
Heavy smoke can irritate our respiratory system.

It increases the risk of developing infections such as pneumonia, COVID-19, ear infections.

It can exacerbate pre-existing lung conditions such as asthma, COPD, COVID-19.
Who is at Risk for Smoke Exposure

- People with lung conditions such as COVID-19, asthma, COPD, chronic bronchitis, emphysema
- People with heart diseases, diabetes, cancer and mental illness
- Athletes participating in strenuous outdoor sports
- Older adults
- Pregnant women
- Infants/Children
What to watch for:

- Eye irritation
- Dry cough
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezy breathing
- Headaches
- Nausea/vomiting

These symptoms can be managed without medical interventions.
Recommendations to reduce smoke exposure

- Limit outdoor activities
- Stay indoors with closed doors and windows
- Use commercially available HEPA filter to improve air quality
- Use MERV 13+ air filters
- Change home air filters
- Reduce indoor pollution by avoiding frying food, smoking and burning incense
Recommendations to reduce smoke exposure continued...

- Keep windows closed and air conditioning on when travelling in a car
- Check Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) before leaving home
- Engage in indoor games and activities
- Consider using a N95 or P100 filtration mask
When Should You Start To Take Precautions

- People vulnerable to smoke exposure should start to take precautions when AQHI index is low-moderate (1-6).
- Healthy individuals should consider taking precautions when smoke conditions are heavy and AQHI index is anywhere between 6-10.
- When present with signs and symptoms of smoke exposure.
When should you seek medical care

- Worsening shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Severe cough which is persistent and aggravating
- Dizziness
- Hoarse voice
- Mental confusion
Now Go Enjoy Okanagan weather Safely with Wildfire Exposure Safety Tips!